



# Office of Community Engagement

Impact Report

Fall 2020

**BRIGHTER WORLD**

[community.mcmaster.ca](http://community.mcmaster.ca)



# Our Team

The work of our Office could not be done without our dedicated and talented team:



**Sheila Sammon**  
Director



**Dave Heidebrecht**  
Office Manager



**Ashley Shinde**  
Administrative Assistant



**Sashaina Singh**  
Knowledge Broker &  
Community Partnership  
Developer



**C.A. Klassen**  
Community-Based  
Research Coordinator



**Jay Carter**  
Community-Engaged  
Education Program Manager



**Beth Levinson**  
Educational Developer



**Celeste Licorish**  
Access Program Manager



**Evan Gravely**  
Research Shop Coordinator



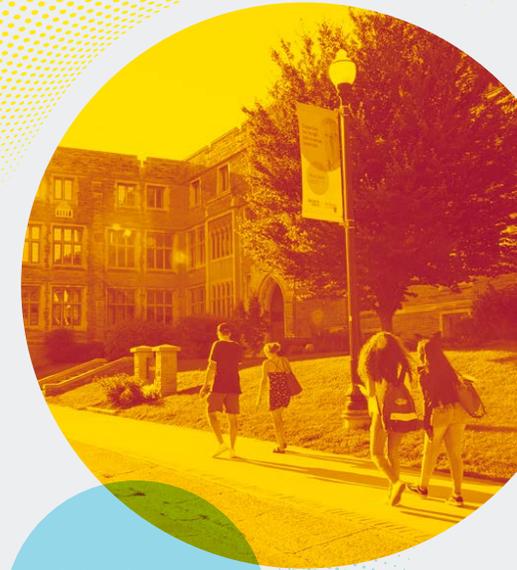
**Randy Kay**  
Outreach Director



**Christine Yachouh**  
Project Lead,  
Carnegie Classification for  
Community Engagement



**Elise DesJardins**  
Project Lead,  
OCE Internal Evaluation



Authors of this report:  
Christine, Elise, Dave,  
Sheila, Celeste,  
Sashaina, Ashley

The Office of Community Engagement reports to the Provost's Office. Vice Provosts Susan Searls Giroux and Kim Dej, and Provosts David Wilkinson, David Farrar, Susan Searls Giroux (Acting) and Susan Tighe have provided encouragement, guidance and support to OCE. Our work has also been enhanced by the help of Cara-Jane Dempsey (Vice Provost's Office). Many thanks to Jeff Wingard for his outstanding contributions while he was working with us as Community Co-Director.

# Contents

4

Making an Impact

5

Impact of Our Last Strategic Plan

7

A New Way Forward—Igniting  
Inspiration through a New Strategic Plan

8

Building Relationships

9

Connecting the Dots

11

Building Capacity through Tools

12

Building Capacity through Programs

13

Building Capacity through Infrastructure

15

OCE Programs

15

McMaster Access Program

16

Research Shop

18

CityLAB Hamilton

19

Community Engagement Minor and Courses

20

New Partnership Program: MacChangers

21

New: The CONNECTION Program

22

Community Engagement Across Campus

22

Connect with Us



# Making an Impact

At its core, community engagement—the act of community and campus partners working collaboratively together for mutual benefit—is about making an impact through a commitment to the public good. In 2016, working with hundreds of campus and community partners, community engagement staff facilitated the development of the University's first community engagement strategy that focused on **one shared purpose—the vision of working together for an inclusive, sustainable Greater Hamilton**. Over the past 4 years, this vision has driven the Office of Community Engagement's (OCE) efforts to kindle optimism and inspire the generation of new McMaster programs and partnerships, each of which are striving to serve the greater good and illuminate solutions that make both a local and global impact. We have not only been active participants in affecting change but have respected and built on McMaster's history of community relationships. We have encouraged an awareness of and expansion of principled community engagement in education, research and service.

Though we cannot begin to capture the impact of every relationship, every student experience, or every partnership that arose during this time, our team has witnessed hundreds of partnerships that have made, and continue to make, a significant difference in our community. **As we begin the next chapter of community engagement at McMaster with our second strategic plan, this report focuses on one key theme: impact.**

This report will briefly review the work of the Office of Community Engagement over the past 4 years. Based on that review we will present our new 2020-2025 strategic plan with key highlights of our impact from the last academic year, and impact stories. The last section of our report will summarize our programs and identify how to connect with our office.



# Impact of Our Last Strategic Plan

As we reach the end of our first strategic plan, we reflected on our accomplishments to date and where we have had significant impact. In particular, we developed a solid foundation of practices and infrastructure for community-engaged work at the University and within the Hamilton community. Most objectives that guide our work are ongoing—they require us to continually strive towards embedding community engagement in the processes and policies at the University, building relationships with community partners, and removing barriers to working together. All with an eye on impact, we have highlighted some outcomes that we have achieved in the last 4 years as they relate to the goals in our first strategic plan.



## 1. Establish the Principles of Community Engagement as the foundation of community-campus partnerships

- **Embedded the principles into undergraduate curriculum** within the Community Engagement Minor including our Foundations Course CMTYENGA 2A03, McMaster Child and Youth University program courses CMTYEMGA 2MC3 and 2MD3 and our Semester in Residence courses CMTYENGA 4A06/4A09.
- Facilitated **over 125 presentations** to McMaster staff, students and faculty on the principles of community engagement.
- **Established 2 awards:** the *President's Awards for Community Engaged Scholarship* and *MSU Community Engagement Teaching Award*. To qualify for the awards, nominees were required to articulate how their work reflected the principles of community engagement.
- **Recognized 3 campus and community partnerships** through the *President's Awards for Community Engaged Scholarship* with **each partnership receiving \$10,000** to foster their continued research projects.
- Responded to a request to join the Carnegie Foundation Canadian Pilot Classification Cohort designed to **review and embed principled community engagement** into the policies and practices of the University.

## 2. Build bridges between the University and the greater Hamilton community, embedding the University in the community and inviting community into the University

- **Established the OCE as a central bridge** between the University and greater Hamilton community.
- **Successfully advocated for decreased parking fees for community partners** entering campus and worked with Continuing Education to provide meeting space for McMaster affiliated community groups.
- Facilitated Change Camp Hamilton three years in a row, **creating hundreds of community-engaged experiential learning opportunities** and developing stronger partnerships and relationships with the City of Hamilton, the Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton, the Hamilton Community Foundation, Mohawk College, Redeemer University College. The series engaged **over 500 attendees** and directly contributed **234 action recommendations to the City of Hamilton's Our Future Hamilton 25-year vision**.
- Facilitated **4 annual1 Community-Campus Idea Exchanges** to bring **over 600 community and campus partners** together on and off campus to discuss collaborative strategies to address shared challenges.
- Developed a **co-director leadership model** that allows for the development of relationships both within the University (academic director) and within the Hamilton community (community director).

<sup>1</sup> The OCE did not host a Community-Campus Idea Exchange in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 3. Align with neighbourhoods, community groups, governments, and institutions to partner on joint ventures and collaborative projects that respond to community-driven issues and priorities

- Established the **McMaster Research Shop** as an OCE program to provide rapid research to community requests. A total of **44 projects** have been completed since the program was transferred to the OCE in 2016.
- **Created a Community-Campus CoLaboratory** focused on new partnerships related to digital literacy, mobility, and social entrepreneurship that resulted in **\$15,000 in project grants** and contributed directly to new programs with the Hamilton Public Library, City of Hamilton, and YWCA Hamilton.
- A collective of **12 local women are now selling their products** out of a retrofitted shipping container in Barton Village.
- **Two Digital Literacy Summits** were hosted at the Hamilton Public Library and engaged over **60 community and campus stakeholders**.
- A **by-law was passed** for King William to temporarily close to vehicles to support local businesses by offering diners a safe "dine-in" experience.



- Created the **McMaster Access Strategy** as a direct result of requests from community partners. The program is being developed to assist academically qualified students from marginalized and underrepresented groups in Hamilton and surrounding communities to access university education at the undergraduate level.
- Offered **26 Community-Campus Catalyst Grants** valued at a total of \$30,000 to partnerships between Faculties/ Major Units, students and community partners.
- Provided over **\$10,000 in financial sponsorship to over 12 community and campus events** such as the LGBTQ+ Solidarity Night, Model City Hall, State of the Neighbourhoods and 100in1 Day Hamilton.
- **Co-developed the CityLAB Hamilton program** in collaboration with the City of Hamilton, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University College. The program has involved **over 39,000 student hours** on city projects to-date.
- Established **close relationships with community partners** involved in social justice work and connected McMaster faculty, students and staff to respond to identified needs.

#### 4. Assess and learn from the outcomes and impacts of our work on an ongoing basis

- Developed a **cyclical model of feedback** through the annual Idea Exchange to understand both opportunities and barriers to community engagement.
- **Presented the outcomes of McMaster community engagement** program growth and development at multiple national and international conferences.
- Participated in the *Impact and Strategic Clarity* module offered by *Innoweave* through the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation to clarify our intended impact and to develop **a new 5-year strategic plan for 2020-2025**.



# A New Way Forward— Igniting Inspiration through a New Strategic Plan

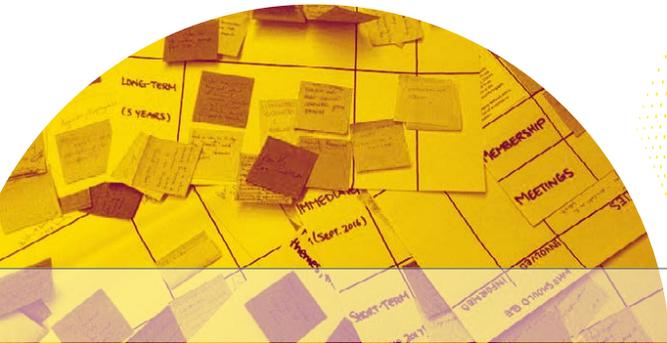
To build on the foundation of the existing strategic plan, our office participated in the *Impact and Strategic Clarity* module offered by *Innoweave* through the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation from September 2019 to April 2020. Our objectives in completing the module were to i) clarify our mission (i.e., what we are trying to achieve and what we will hold ourselves accountable to); and ii) develop a new 5-year strategic plan that would articulate how we will achieve this mission and the results we are striving to have both locally and globally.

Through this process, we developed the following mission to guide our work:

**By 2025, McMaster University will have 500 community-engaged partnerships that are addressing community—and university—identified priorities, built on respectful relationships, mutually beneficial, equity-seeking, and adequately resourced.**

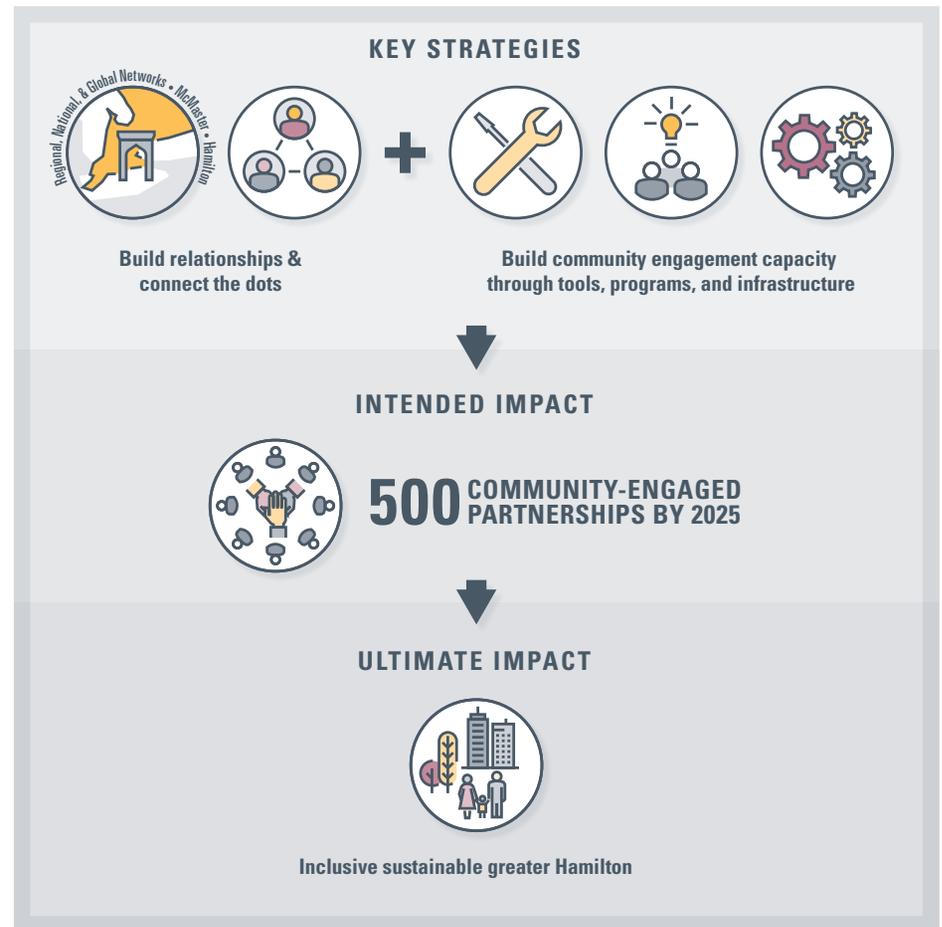
Our new strategic plan outlines five key strategies to build community-engaged partnerships and achieve our intended impacts. Many objectives of our first strategic plan are ongoing and connect with this next phase of community engagement at McMaster.

To align with this new direction, on the next pages are some examples of what we do—build relationships, connect the dots, and build capacity as they relate to our work and resulting impact in the last year.



Office of Community Engagement

## OCE 2020-2025 Strategic Plan





# Building Relationships

We can't have community without relationships—these are the connections that build community. Any successful partnership must be built on trusting and respectful relationships guided by integrity. We realize that relationships take time to develop and thus we commit to providing opportunities to connect people across communities, sectors, and disciplines to foster a genuine and interconnected network of colleagues to work together for an inclusive, sustainable Greater Hamilton Area.

## Our role is to:

- Create opportunities for campus and community partners to connect
- Create opportunities for relationships to be built across campus
- Attend community, faculty, and major unit events or meetings
- Monitor issues and opportunities
- Identify priorities to support, and
- Connect with regional, global, & national community-engaged networks

## Examples from 2019-2020:

- Responded to **over 900 requests**
- Initiated the **development of internal community-engaged and experiential education working groups** focused on improving alignment and coordination between Faculties and major units

- **Founded a new community of practice** to link recruiters from post-secondary institutions in Ontario and to **share strategies** for shifting the broader post-secondary system on issues related to access.
- **Supported 7 new partnership grants**, including 3 projects supported through the McMaster Community Poverty Initiative with sponsorship from the Hamilton Community Foundation
- **Served on a range of boards, committees and community tables** across the University and throughout Hamilton to better understand the issues our community is facing
- **Connected with over 100 peers** at post-secondary institutions across Canada and the US through our membership with Community Based Research Canada, Research Impact Canada and the Canadian Pilot Cohort for the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement

## Opening of King William Street



**Dave Heidebrecht**  
Office Manager



- During the Winter 2019 Term, an interdisciplinary team of McMaster students participated in a **CityLAB Hamilton** project to create consensus among stakeholders in order to implement a collaborative vision of a semi-regular street opening along King William for Hamiltonians to enjoy.
- Dave Heidebrecht facilitated introductions between the students and City project leads to key stakeholders to **build relationships** towards the goal of a healthy neighbourhood.
- The students completed thorough consultation with the community which included **collaborating on a shared vision** for the street opening and a final report to support implementation.
- In the Spring of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, **Council voted to consider applications for outdoor dining districts to help business owners survive the pandemic, with staff using King William as a strong example** of a street that could be opened for safe dining with strong support from the community.
- King William Street is now partially open for businesses to recover, the community to enjoy, and with other applications from across the City of Hamilton being considered.

“Dave facilitated introductions between the students and City project leads to key stakeholders to build relationships towards the goal of a healthy neighbourhood.”





# Connecting the Dots

Our team develops our relationships and connections to identify opportunities for McMaster University to respond to community priorities through research, education, or service. Relatedly, we respond to requests from faculty, staff and students interested in community connections for learning, research and volunteerism. We listen to ideas that are brought to us and actively connect people together who have shared interests with the goal of building new community-campus partnerships.

## Our role is to:

- Make introductions or broker partnerships around shared interests or aligned timelines
- Identify how resources, partnerships, or programs can address community- and university-identified priorities
- Identify and agree upon Faculty community engagement needs and partnerships

## Examples from 2019-2020:

- Worked with McMaster’s recruiters to **create and organize specific access tours for marginalized youth**
- Supported student leaders from McMaster in expanding the development of Model City Hall in Hamilton by **advising on program development and making connections to program contributors**

- Provided all 6 McMaster Faculties with **CityLAB connections** that resulted in **26 community-engaged projects**
- Redeveloped our website with new information to **help community and university partners navigate who to connect with** and how they can get involved with the OCE
- Developed **new connections** for the Bachelor of Health Sciences Engaging the City program
- Connected McMaster researchers focusing on creating healthier communities with local community organizations to **collaboratively develop new research initiatives**

**Ashley Shinde**  
Administrative Assistant



Ashley leads the OCE’s communication efforts, including our regular newsletter.

Last year we distributed 25 newsletters promoting community and campus opportunities and news to over 1200 subscribers.





## Empowerment Squared

Over 2019-2020, the OCE worked with **Empowerment Squared (E2)** to elevate the partnership with McMaster. The majority of E2 volunteers are McMaster students but there was not a clear path to advance this to a more formal partnership.

- Sashaina Singh met regularly with E2 staff to pursue their goals for the partnership and to connect them to resources and groups on campus. **This helped E2 staff better understand how to navigate the University and identify available supports.** Sashaina was also able to share what other community organizations were doing in Hamilton to help E2 reduce duplication of efforts and identify gaps for programming.
- We connected E2 to the McMaster Research Shop** to investigate what attracts McMaster students to volunteer with E2 and what makes them stay. **The findings have helped inform their volunteer recruitment and retention strategies.**

- We connected E2 to the School of Graduate Studies** to share volunteer opportunities to graduate students and promoted the opportunity through our own communication channels. We also connected E2 to volunteer fairs on campus. **These efforts resulted in 35 new volunteers recruited to support the organization's programs.**
- We connected E2 to MSU Clubs. This resulted in the founding of a new MSU club to create a stronger partnership between McMaster and the organization** and a formal pathway for students interested in volunteering with E2.

Empowerment Squared is a Hamilton-based charity that empowers newcomer and marginalized youth and communities in Canada and across the world to succeed through mentorship, access to post-secondary education, information literacy, and sports and recreation.

Empowerment Squared received a \$5,000 incubator grant through the Office of Community Engagement to remove the cost barrier of Vulnerable Sector Checks for volunteers.

**Sashaina Singh**  
Knowledge Broker & Community Partnership Developer



Sashaina met regularly with Empowerment Squared staff to pursue their goals for the partnership and to connect them to resources and groups on campus. This helped E2 staff better understand how to navigate the University and identify available supports. Sashaina was also able to share what other community organizations were doing in Hamilton to help E2 reduce duplication of efforts and identify gaps for programming.





# Building Capacity through Tools

Our team is comprised of expert community-engagers, educators and researchers working to share their knowledge, resources, and expertise to improve community-engaged practices and processes.

## Our role is to:

- Create and deliver community engagement resources such as workshops, webinars, guides, handbooks, literature, slide shows for faculty, staff, and students
- Raise awareness of OCE as a resource to facilitate relationships
- Identify activities, processes, and tools used in other institutions and communities.
- Support and facilitate faculty, staff, and community partners in using tools and resources in their programs, projects or initiatives



## Examples from 2019-2020:

- **Delivered programming to over 2500 students** through our core programs—the Community Engagement Minor, the Research Shop, and CityLAB Hamilton
- **Presented to graduate students** about community-based research and community-university research collaborations at the request of faculty and course instructors
- Facilitated **workshops on community engagement** and the community engagement principles for faculties, courses, or student groups
- Developed **online and printed guides** to provide direction for McMaster students, faculty, and staff, as well as community members, to work with our office
- Worked with the MacPherson Institute for Teaching and Learning to deliver **workshops** for faculty members and instructors
- Provided **input and support** to recipients of the MacPherson Institute's Experiential Learning in Academic Programs (ELAP) grant program to **advise on their community-engaged education efforts**

## Quickly Developing Community-Engaged Education Tools to Support McMaster's Transition to Online for Fall 2020



- In March 2020, in-person classes were abruptly forced to transition to online course instruction as a result of the stay home directive from the Province of Ontario and Government of Canada in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- In response to this change, McMaster University struck an Ad-Hoc Experiential Learning and Community Engagement Working Group which is led by Kim Dej, Acting Vice-Provost and Sheila Sammon, Academic Director of the Office of Community Engagement.
- The Ad Hoc Experiential Learning and Community Engagement Working Group, representing all six Faculties met during the spring of 2020 to **identify key questions and resources to support faculty** as they add experiential education courses and course components or adapt experiential education for the online context.
- Our team supported the Working Group with a **background review on the challenges, best practices and key considerations for online community-engaged and experiential learning** based on existing literature. It also included a **review of what other post-secondary institutions were doing** to transition their community-engaged and experiential learning to an online/remote environment.
- The preliminary review by our team resulted in the decision to **develop a series of guides that present information and resources** based on McMaster's expertise, scholarly research and resources from other Canadian institutions.

This [Guide to Experiential and Community Engaged Education at McMaster University](#) was created in partnership between the OCE's Educational Developer, Beth Levinson, Cathy Gris , Associate Professor, Faculty of Humanities, and Margaret Secord, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences.

- The full suite of [resource guides](#) are now available online as a **resource for instructors** to access to support their transition to online community engaged education and practice.



**Beth Levinson**  
Educational Developer

When the University halted in-person course instruction as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Beth created The Guide to Experiential and Community Engaged Education at McMaster University in partnership with Cathy Gris , Associate Professor, Faculty of Humanities, and Margaret Secord, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences for instructors to use as a resource for their community-engaged or experiential course



# Building Capacity through Programs

Together, we work to develop and support community-engaged programs that orient McMaster resources towards partnerships that embed **McMaster's principles of community engagement**.

## Our role is to:

- Provide direct support to priority community engagement programs or initiatives, new or existing, within major units and within each faculty at McMaster
- Develop and sustain programs within the OCE that build individual and program-level capacity for community-campus partnerships



## Examples from 2019-2020:

- Provided **support** to the Faculty of Health Sciences for the Master of Public Health Program
- Participated in the Into the World Working Group to support the DeGroote School of Business' goals to **find new ways to practice community involvement** and engagement in their courses
- Provided support to Social Sciences faculty **developing a community-based research platform** and to broker a more formal partnership with Hamilton Public Library
- **Piloted the Incubator Program with MacChangers** to provide guidance on the growth of the program and in building relationships with community advisors and partners
- Facilitated a **community dialogue** session for Social Work's Splane Project to support the development of a Community University Policy Alliance (CUPA) related to women's homelessness.
- **Advised** on the Faculty of Science's 5-year Strategic Plan
- **Promoted** the on-going work of the Faculty of Humanities' Centre for Community-Engaged Narrative Arts

## MacChangers



- The MacChangers Program is a co-curricular initiative launched in 2015 by the Faculty of Engineering with support from MacPherson to pair multidisciplinary teams with community members to propose innovative solutions to local challenges facing the Hamilton community, as well as the global community. A total of 14 students from Engineering, Science and Health Science completed the program in the first year. The Office of Community Engagement was consulted during the implementation of the program.
- As the program became increasingly community-engaged, **the OCE became more involved to integrate the principles of community engagement** into the curriculum and advise on communication strategies with community partners.
- At the end of the Winter 2019 term, Jay Carter offered to provide the MacChangers program with some **strategic planning support** to help the program grow. He facilitated 3 strategic planning sessions which included a SWOT analysis for the program, action planning, and re-visioning.
- In the Spring, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of all in-person MacChangers activities, and there was an idea to plan a virtual activity for the summer, which resulted in the MacChangers Change-A-Thon—a shortened version of the core program in which the eight-month experience is condensed into just 5 days. The OCE staff, **Jay Carter and Beth Levinson continued to support with strategy, logistics, facilitation, and community-connections.**
- The theme for the Change-a-Thon was to tackle local challenges related to COVID-19. The **OCE helped to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the community** and how they are supporting students. This resulted in a community member participating in a consultant role rather than a partnership role for the challenges.

- The June 2020 Change-A-Thon resulted in:
  - **34 proposals** for community challenges submitted from **14 community consultants**
  - **128 students** participating across all faculties and representing all levels
  - Some **projects are continuing on** in different ways. There are videos from each team that are being shared.
  - People's Choice Project for Supporting Local Businesses—Students noticed that many businesses do not have websites because they are community gathering spaces, and also that English was not their first language. They proposed that **McMaster students could help support language translation to support community engagement** while responding to community needs and give these businesses a digital presence during the pandemic.



**Jay Carter**  
Community-Engaged Education Program Manager

Jay provided the MacChangers program with strategic planning support to help the program grow. He facilitated 3 strategic planning sessions which included a SWOT analysis for the program, action planning, and re-visioning.



# Building Capacity through Infrastructure

Our team is also working to establish sustainable University-wide infrastructure—funding, staff, policies, protocols—to support community engagement activities.

## Our role is to:

- Develop the OCE as a core community engagement resource at McMaster
- Develop the Network for Community Campus Partnerships as a coordinated decentralized approach to formalizing community engagement processes at the University
- Recognize and celebrate community engagement accomplishments and milestones
- Reduce identified barriers

## Examples from 2019-2020:

- Participating in the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification - Canadian Pilot Cohort to help **strengthen community engagement infrastructure both at McMaster and nationally**
- Developed a **Faculty Liaison Program** so that our team can more effectively support the Faculties
- Participated in a working group to explore options for changes to Tenure and Promotions and Career Progress **policies to recognize community engagement**
- Established the **CityLAB Semester in Residence 15-unit course** and took a larger role in teaching the course
- Continued to develop OCE infrastructure as **core resource for community engagement** at McMaster by adding two staff members to our team
- Provided over **4200 discounted parking passes** to support community partners visiting campus for research, education and service partnerships





## Improving Pathways to McMaster— Establishing the Access Program

- In January 2017, the OCE organized a campus tour for partners working with the City of Hamilton's Xperience Annex. During the visit, **Xperience Annex staff identified a gap – that McMaster's recruitment efforts and materials are targeted to traditional students** (students preparing to graduate from high school) and there was **a lack of resources for those taking non-traditional routes to post-secondary education**. Additionally, the feedback suggested that recruitment materials did not sufficiently include representations of diverse student groups.
- In the Spring of 2017, **the OCE partnered with the Hamilton Community Foundation's ABACUS Grad Track Program** to organize a tour for their grade 6 participants. The students engaged in fun, educational campus activities and enjoyed their time so much that they returned shortly after to host their 100in1 Day interventions on McMaster's main campus.
- Following the connections to the Xperience Annex and Hamilton Community Foundation and after facilitating an Idea Exchange workshop exploring this idea further, **the Office of Community Engagement submitted a Proposal for an Access Strategy to the Provost's Council** in the Summer/Fall of 2017 to fill in the gaps identified through these partnerships and help

youth access a post-secondary education at McMaster University. **The proposal resulted in the procurement of a consultant to explore the potential for an institutional access strategy.** The proposal was approved, and a new staff role was created to develop and manage the strategy.

- The Office of Community Engagement welcomed Celeste Licorish in 2019 as the University's first Access Program Manager, leading the development of pathways for under-represented students to access postsecondary opportunities at McMaster. **She has already established close partnerships with the Hamilton school boards and local community organizations while inaugurating a new access-oriented scholarship.** She works closely with campus partners. These elements were part of the access strategy Celeste launched in June 2019 just four months after her first day.
- **The first cohort of 40 Access students will begin in Fall 2020.**

By connecting and collaborating with education, health care and employment providers, the Xperience Annex supports youth ages 18-29 in achieving their goals.



Celeste Licorish  
Access Program Manager



Celeste was the recipient of McMaster University's President's Award for Outstanding Service -Early Achievement for 2019. Thanks to her work and the Access Program, the first cohort of 40 Access students will begin in Fall 2020.

### HAMILTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Grad Track is part of ABACUS, the Hamilton Community Foundation's initiative to put more students on the path to post-secondary education, including trades and apprenticeships. Grad Track reaches out to middle-school students who could benefit from ABACUS programming but who are not as likely to show up for traditional extra-curricular activities.



# OCE Programs



## McMaster Access Program

McMaster's Access Strategy assists academically qualified students from marginalized and underrepresented groups in Hamilton and surrounding communities to access university education at the undergraduate level at McMaster. Our team works with students to help navigate the application and admissions process and are here to ensure success through to graduation. This campus wide strategy, under the leadership of the OCE, formally launched in June 2019.

### 2019-2020 Highlights:

- Forged and developed relationships with **15 regional community partners** including 5 community organizations and 2 local school boards
- Facilitated **9 campus experiences**, reached **over 400 students** through recruitment events, participated in **30 presentations**, and completed **70 one-on-one advising appointments**
- Launched a **new Access Award** in collaboration with Financial Aid.
  - Renewable bursaries valued between 10,000 and 25,000 dollars were awarded to 8 students entering McMaster in Fall 2020 to support them in their post-secondary journey
- Founded a **new community of practice** to link recruiters from postsecondary institutions in Ontario to share strategies for shifting the broader postsecondary system on issues related to access
- **Celeste was the recipient of McMaster University's President's Award** for Outstanding Service - Early Achievement
- Admitted the first cohort of **40 access students** (Fall 2020)



# Research Shop

The **McMaster Research Shop** is a co-curricular volunteer program where graduate and upper-year undergraduate students work on research projects in partnership with the community. The Research Shop operates under the Office and works with public, non-profit, and community groups to provide plain-language answers to their research questions. The Shop aims to balance producing something useful for the community partners with providing meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students.

## 2019-2020 Highlights:

**42** students held positions as Research Shop volunteers. This year was the most competitive year for positions.

**90%** of volunteers stated they a rich learning experience volunteering with the Research Shop and applied their academic skills in a non-academic setting

**83%** of volunteers have applied their skills learned in a non-academic setting



**Evan Gravelly**  
Research Shop Coordinator

Evan supports the Research Shop by coordinating the moving pieces involved in the intake, scoping, recruitment, implementation, and deliverables for research requests.

“Very impressed with the student-researchers, though now I’d call them researchers, and the project we created. From my perspective and [others at the organization], we would definitely like to partner again.”

**John Howard Society of Hamilton**  
Community Partner

The John Howard Society of Hamilton has used the evaluation findings to report back to their funder and communicate the success of the program in terms of improving youths’ soft skills, transition to high school, and interest in post-secondary education. They are also using the report findings to implement concrete changes to the program.

## The Research Shop completed 12 research projects this past year:

1 Financial Empowerment Programs in Canada: An Environmental Scan for Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton

3 Strengthening Diversity and Inclusivity in the Hamilton Community Land Trust: Recommendations from Interviews and the Literature for the Hamilton Community Land Trust

5 Finding a Place to Call Home: An Environmental Scan of Newcomer Affordable Housing Across Canada for the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC)

7 Empowerment Squared: Volunteer Recruitment, Engagement

9 Evaluating the Impact of Community Development Work in the South Mountain Community for Hamilton East Kiwanis Non-profit Homes and Victoria Park Community Homes

11 Evaluating the Efficacy of Trauma Informed Yoga as a Trauma Therapy for Quite a Stretch Yoga

2 Clients’ interest in purchasing low-cost staple products at the Venture Centre Marketplace for the Good Shepherd Women’s Services

4 Mobility Lab Evaluation: Striving for Collective Impact

6 Evaluating the Kiwanis ABACUS Program for the Kiwanis Boys & Girls Club

8 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Assessment of the Office of Community Engagement for the McMaster Office of Community Engagement & Equity and Inclusion Office

10 ACHIEVES Program Evaluation for the John Howard Society

12 Identifying Gaps in Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Support Services in the Greater Hamilton Area for PATH Employment & Erich’s Cupboard

# Community-Engaged Research

Through our Community-Engaged Research program, we offer friendly connections and navigation to students, faculty, and community members who want to use research to contribute to the public good, but don't yet know how to find each other. We understand that community organizations are under pressure to demonstrate value, relevance, and impact through evidence in a shifting funding environment, while national research funding bodies are increasingly funding community-engaged research partnerships. With this in mind, the Office of Community Engagement facilitates and supports research at McMaster with connection and benefit to Hamilton communities through the Research Shop, by supporting connections between faculty members and community groups, and liaising between partners and regional and national research networks.

## 2019-2020 Highlights:

- Supported **knowledge mobilization activities for a community-based needs assessment** of Two-spirit and LGBTQ+ community members in Hamilton, [Mapping the Void](#), led by Dr. Suzanne Mills. This involved facilitating report printing, co-organizing a report launch event, and speaking to media about the project.
- Supported a **Faculty of Health Sciences Co-Design Hub research project** that will see McMaster researchers working with a range of community organizations to address the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations. This work involved sharing information about events, supporting design evaluation efforts, and advising on ideas as the project developed
- Delivered **presentations** about community-engaged research to 5 of graduate courses
- Presented the third **President's Award for Community-Engaged Research** to Dr. Juliet Daniel and the Olive Branch of Hope
- Co-led the **development of a new strategic plan for Community-Based Research Canada**, a pan-Canadian organization advancing community-based research excellence in Canada by strengthening partnerships, bridging capacity, mobilizing knowledge, and championing community-based research among individuals, communities, and institutions

**C.A. Klassen**  
Community-Based  
Research Coordinator



C.A. oversees the McMaster Research Shop and leads the OCE's community-engaged research support activities



C.A. also serves as McMaster's lead liaison with Research Impact Canada, a pan-Canadian network of universities committed to maximizing the impact of academic research for public good.



# CityLAB Hamilton

**CityLAB Hamilton** works with city staff members to identify complex challenges related to the City of Hamilton's strategic priorities and matches them with faculty and courses from Hamilton's three post-secondary institutions—McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University College. CityLAB Hamilton creates the space to develop solutions that support the City's Strategic Priorities by providing a rich experiential learning environment for students and city staff alike.

The **CityLAB Hamilton Semester in Residence (SIR)** CMTYENGA 4A06 and CMTYENGA 4A09 is an immersive, 15-unit experiential learning course based in downtown Hamilton, and the only course of its kind at McMaster. Working in interdisciplinary teams, students co-develop sustainability projects with City of Hamilton staff and collaborate with members of the broader community, while learning more about community engagement through lectures, workshops and field trips that take students into a range of urban community spaces.

## 2019-2020 Highlights:

- Over **700 students enrolled** in **22 McMaster courses** matched with City projects
- Students' reflections on the program expressed that they learned more from their experience at CityLAB than any other class in University, they felt they were able to make a **longstanding impact on the community**, and that the course helped **bridge the gap between student and professional work**
- A total of **28 McMaster students** participated in the CityLAB Semester in Residence Program from the Faculties of Science, Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities and Business
- The CityLAB Semester in Residence Teaching Team, which includes Dave Heidebrecht and Randy Kay, was **awarded the MSU Community Engagement Award**



**Randy Kay**  
Outreach Director



"The students in SIR have proven to be a truly joyful, creative and dedicated force for innovation and change. CityLAB has provided important space for collaboration with city staff and community partners that helps strengthen the impact of the student project work."

**Randy Kay, Outreach Director for CityLAB Hamilton**

"CityLAB Semester in Residence taught me so many things that I would never have had the opportunity to learn otherwise. The program allowed me the opportunity to make real impact and real change within community and the individuals who reside there."

**Jeremy Sewnauth, fourth year Life Sciences student and CityLAB Semester in Residence participant**



## Community Engagement Minor and Courses

Community Engaged Education can be distinguished from other types of experiential education by focusing on relevant community issues and is designed to develop the skills, knowledge and guiding principles needed to engage with communities. Our community-engaged education team support faculty and staff to develop new community-engaged courses and programs, help to make connections with individuals, groups and organizations who may be interested in partnering on a new educational program, and point students toward community-engaged curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

### 2019-2020 Highlights:

**Over 140**

undergraduate students were enrolled in at least one of three CMTYENGA courses

**Over 650**

students supported through community-engaged curriculum (e.g., course presentations on the principles of community engagement)

**5**

students declared the Interdisciplinary Minor in Community Engagement



**Sheila Sammon**  
Director



As the academic lead of the Minor of Community Engagement, Sheila has led the development of all of the CMTYENGA courses and the on-going growth and development of the community engagement minor.

"I had the opportunity to volunteer in a leadership role with the Dundas Buskerfest. After taking the Community Engagement Foundations Course, I learned the importance of continuity in community partnerships, and I was nervous that by taking the position and leaving after graduation, I would put the festival in a difficult situation. I decided to sit down and talk with one of the coordinators to discuss my interest and we developed a system whereby I could still volunteer in the leadership role, but in a way that smoothly transitions a new volunteer after my graduation, so everybody wins!"

**2019-2020 Foundations  
Course Student**



## New Partnership Program: MacChangers

**MacChangers** is a co-curricular program that pairs multidisciplinary teams with community members to propose innovative solutions to local challenges facing the Hamilton community, as well as the global community. Originally offered by the Faculty of Engineering and the MacPherson Institute, this program is now supported in partnership by the Faculty and the Office of Community Engagement. Moving forward, Jay Carter and Beth Levinson will support the program's community engaged experiential and educational elements.

### 2019-2020 Highlights:

- By the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, a total of **81 students**, representing each faculty, completed the program—marking **108% growth** in student participation since the program was launched
- The virtual MacChangers: **Change-A-Thon** engaged over **135 students** across all faculties
- As a result of strategic planning sessions hosted by the OCE, the Program is now formally **aligned with the Our Future Hamilton objectives**



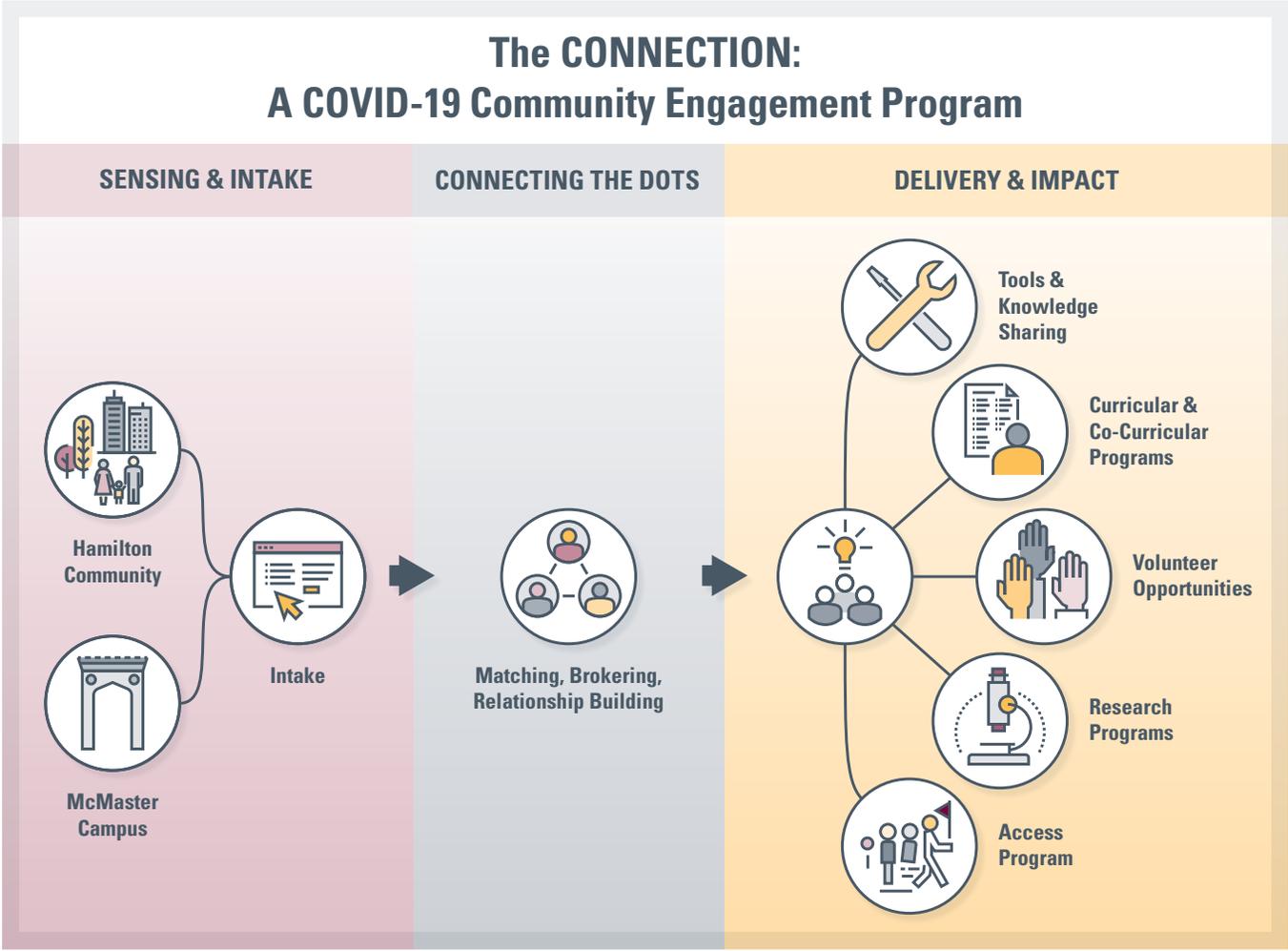
ENGINEERING



## New: The CONNECTION Program

The Connection is a new program designed to facilitate online, mutually beneficial partnerships between Campus and local Community organizations. As our communities look for ways to adapt and rebuild in response to COVID-19 The Connection will make the process of addressing community and campus identified needs easier by providing online tools and resources. By doing this, the important relationships between campus and community will be maintained and enhanced while allowing new ones to develop. It is all part of our larger strategy to increase the number of community campus partnerships. The Connection program started this summer and will extend throughout the 2020/2021 year.

To support community and campus needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, we added a new section to our website to support community and university responses to the pandemic.



# Community Engagement Across Campus

Even before the Office of Community Engagement was established, members of the McMaster community were engaging with local communities through research, education and service activities. The OCE is now tracking the community-engaged partnerships we are supporting through our new Partnership Database. You can view the partnerships we are working on by accessing the [Database](#).

Want to let us know what university-community partnerships and projects you are working on? Email us at [community@mcmaster.ca](mailto:community@mcmaster.ca)



# Connect with Us

The Office of Community Engagement is here to support faculty, staff and students as well as community members with their requests related to community engagement. The list below outlines a few ways to learn more about the services we offer and ways to get involved with our office.

Check out our simple guides to learn more how you can access support or get involved with the Office of Community Engagement:

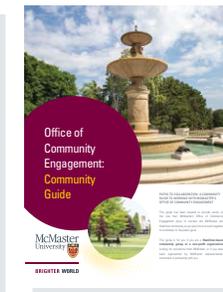
## Faculty and Staff Guide



## Student Guide



## Community Guide



- The [Connection's online intake form](#) is designed for Campus faculty, staff or students looking to connect with a community organization or a local community organization looking for McMaster expertise or resources.
- Learn more about the [McMaster Research Shop](#) and submit a request
- Submit events and initiatives to be featured in our [online newsletter](#) and read past newsletters

We hope to hear from you soon.