

President's Report to McMaster University's Board of Governors December 14, 2023

Spotlight on Research and Scholarship

As one of Canada's pre-eminent research-intensive universities, we have continued to focus on making a transformative, positive impact through our world-class research and scholarly activities at the local, regional, national, and global levels.

Over the past year, we have made progress on our goals in a number of ways:

- Secured \$8M in funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to begin Phase 2 clinical trials for McMaster's inhaled COVID-19 vaccine.
- Received 10% of all funding awarded to Ontario universities by federal research granting agencies.
- Ranked 33rd in the world for global impact in the 2023 Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings – in large part, a result of McMaster's strong research alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Through the activities of the Forge, McMaster supported 30 start-ups founded by students, alumni and entrepreneurs, enabling the companies to raise \$2.7M in financing, build strong intellectual property portfolios (20 patents total) and grow sales globally, generating \$2.54M in revenues.
- Partnered with Ultra Safe Nuclear Corporation and Global First Power to conduct a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) feasibility study evaluating the potential of deploying an SMR on the McMaster campus or an affiliated site.

I would like to highlight further advances in this important priority area.

A Refreshed Strategic Research Plan

[Research for a Brighter World — Strategic Plan for Research \(2018-2024\)](#) outlined a vision and action plan to advance McMaster's research mission and take the University's research excellence to an even higher level. Key objectives included:

- Recruiting and retaining researchers and trainees of the highest calibre.
- Building on our strengths and capitalizing on our interdisciplinary capacity.
- Promoting a deeper understanding of the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion to strengthen our research programs and teams.
- Ensuring that Indigenous ways of knowing are recognized as valid forms of research.
- Encouraging a broad range of research approaches and methodologies.
- Promoting knowledge mobilization and translation, technology transfer, and commercialization to maximize the benefit of research to society.
- Fostering collaboration with national and international academic, hospital, government, community and industry partners.
- Providing trainees and early-career researchers with innovative research, mentoring and training opportunities.

Tremendous progress has been made against each of these key objectives, ensuring that our University continues to maintain its national and global reputation for research excellence, and make a difference—

in the competitiveness of our researchers, in the quality of our teaching, and in the impact we have on the world around us.

As this plan concludes, Vice-President of Research (Acting), Andy Knights will engage in consultations with groups across campus as the new five-year strategic research plan is developed. This plan will guide the continued strengthening and implementation of initiatives, supports and strategies to enhance excellence and inclusivity in research and scholarship at McMaster. I will keep Board members updated as this important new strategy develops.

Expanding Nuclear Research and Education

The area of nuclear research and education continues to be an important focus for McMaster. Activities are centred around the development of new academic and training opportunities, the commercialization of medical isotope-based therapies, innovative materials science research, advances in clean energy solutions, and medical isotope production, including the production of Iodine-125 used to treat 70,000 cancer patients per year.

Over the past year, there have been several key developments that are allowing us to expand opportunities for training and education, accelerate key research programs and improve access to life-saving isotopes in Canada and around the world.

Success in Attracting Government Funding

Last month, McMaster's Chief Nuclear Officer, Dave Tucker, and I were pleased to host government leaders, including Hamilton Mountain MP Lisa Hepfner and Oakville North – Burlington MP Pam Damoff, on campus to celebrate a [\\$6.8-million federal investment in the McMaster Nuclear Reactor](#) (MNR) first announced back in June.

The investment will enhance MNR's capacity for medical isotope research and the production of custom isotopes for clinical trials. It will also support the development and production of two additional medical isotopes at MNR: a made-in-Canada technology for clinical quality Lutetium-177, and [a new Holmium-166 liver cancer therapy](#) that will be made available to hospitals across North America.

This investment is part of McMaster's \$25 million expansion program at the MNR to increase the diversity and quantity of isotopes produced. It also builds on a [\\$6.8M investment made by the Government of Ontario](#), which helped expand operations at the MNR to 24 hours a day, five days per week. The increased hours of operation will expand isotope production, enable more research into clean energy and [small modular reactors](#) (SMRs), and increase access to neutron beam time for Canada's world-leading materials science programs.

NSERC-CNSC Small Modular Reactor Research Grants

I am pleased to report that, over the summer, four McMaster researchers in the Faculties of Engineering and Science were [awarded a total of \\$1 million in funding to support research related to small modular reactors](#).

The investment is part of the NSERC-Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) Small Modular Reactors Research Grant Initiative. The funds support research that will increase Canada's capacity to regulate SMRs, and will enhance the capabilities of Canadian universities to undertake research related to SMRs and increase training for the next generation of nuclear scientists, engineers and policymakers. McMaster recipients include:

- Adriaan Buijs, Faculty of Engineering, \$190,000 for the Development of Tools for Analysis of Power Excursion Events of TRISO-Fuelled SMRs.
- Peijun Guo, Faculty of Engineering, \$360,000 | Managing multi-hazard risks hindering SMR deployment in the Canadian North.
- Ousmane Hisseine, Faculty of Engineering, \$141,000 | Ultra-High-Performance Concrete Containments for Safer Small Modular Reactors.
- Carmel Mothersill, Faculty of Science, \$360,000 | Towards the development of approaches to protection of the environment around SMRs.

This is an exciting development as momentum around SMRs as a means of advancing net zero carbon goals continues to grow in Canada and around the world. As Canada's nuclear university, McMaster has an abundance of expertise in this area, and the funding is a testament to our researchers' leadership in this emerging and increasingly important field.

The CNL Nuclear Undergraduate Research Experience Program

Earlier this year, the University partnered with Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) to launch the CNL Nuclear Undergraduate Research Experience program, which provides McMaster students in the Faculties of Engineering and Science with opportunities to develop research and technical skills in the nuclear field.

Students are paired with a CNL employee who provides mentorship and guidance on research projects. [Students have the chance to take part in two weeks of hands-on research](#), at CNL located at the Chalk River site or at other AECL sites. Students also have access to cutting-edge technologies, which use nuclear science and technologies to advance research in clean energy and the environment, health sciences, safety and security.

With the global recognition of nuclear as a clean energy source to be implemented in the fight against climate change, the demand for an experienced and skilled workforce is expected to grow significantly. Innovative collaboration and programming such as this is critical to developing the talent to help meet this challenge.

Supporting McMaster's Innovation Ecosystem

As one of Canada's most research-intensive universities, the impact of our research extends far beyond our campus. Teams across the University are developing ways to support student and faculty entrepreneurs throughout the entire innovation pipeline, from idea to implementation.

McMaster Seed Fund Projects

The [McMaster Seed Fund](#) is an important component of McMaster's strategy to support commercialization and build the University's innovation ecosystem. Led by the Office of the Vice-President Research in collaboration with the McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO), the fund is an early-stage investment vehicle designed to foster startup companies from McMaster research that have the potential for significant economic and societal impact in the Hamilton region and beyond.

To date, eight companies have been awarded a combined \$2.7 million. Third round recipients include:

- HARvEST Systems – a sustainable technology company co-founded by James Cotton, a mechanical engineering professor and Jeffrey Girard, a research lab manager at the McMaster Institute for Energy Studies. The company aims to support decarbonization of the restaurant industry with their fuel-less, carbon free hot water heating system. The funds will be used to further develop and commercialize the HARvEST platform.
- A.I.VALI Inc. – a medical device startup co-founded by McMaster professor of medicine and gastroenterologist, David Armstrong. A.I. VALI uses interactive machine learning to document and analyze endoscopy videos in real-time. The funds will be used to make the platform available to researchers, clinics and healthcare providers globally to improve patient procedures.
- Esphera SynBio – a biotech startup co-founded by associate professor of medicine, Brian Lichty. Esphera’s platform technology generated exosomes that deliver defined payloads to targeted cells in the body. It is designed to enhance existing immunotherapy and vaccine technologies and aid in gene therapy, enzyme replacement therapy and cancer immunotherapy.

[Third round Seed Fund recipients](#) were awarded a combined total of \$768,000 in investment. This round of the McMaster Seed Fund builds on the success of the first two rounds, which funded startups Synmedix, Insight Medbotics, AIMA Laboratories, 20/20 OptimEyes Technologies and LLIF Healthcare.

McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO) Annual Report

The McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO) plays a critical role in supporting our experts as they translate their ground-breaking research into innovative technologies. Its [2023 annual report](#) outlines many of the successes achieved by an increasingly broad range of McMaster entrepreneurs, and the ways in which MILO supports them, including:

- Helping researchers secure funding from industry by identifying and evaluating application for matching grant programs offered by the Tri-Agencies and others. In 2023, MILO helped secure more than \$42 million in research funding, supported the creation of 300+ industry partnerships and negotiated 750 partnership agreements.
- Working closely with researchers and industry partners to license a wide range of patented technologies and copyrighted works, and advanced various joint development projects. In the past year, MILO has successfully executed over 400 licenses, which have generated more than \$6 million in royalty and/or licensing revenue.
- Continued growth in the number of invention disclosures, with a strong increase in disclosures relating to software and digital technologies. Results include:
 - A total of 87 disclosures, with 46 from the Faculty of Engineering, 37 from Health Sciences, 7 from Science and 15 from other Faculties and affiliated hospitals.
 - The breakdown of inventors includes: 55% faculty members, 25% undergraduate and graduate students, 20% postdoctoral fellows and research staff.

MILO continues to be an integral part of McMaster’s innovation ecosystem. As we seek to expand our institutional capacity in the areas of entrepreneurship and commercialization, MILO’s continued leadership will be essential to advancing our goal of being a driver of economic prosperity and social innovation in our community and beyond.

Institutional Support for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort at the University to enhance our culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. To do this, several key appointments have been made in the Office of the Vice-President, Research, including Leyla Soleymani, Associate Vice-President, Research (Commercialization & Entrepreneurship) and Suhkvinder Obhi, Associate Vice-President, Research (Society & Impact). We are also undertaking broader University initiatives led by Sean Van Koughnett, Associate Vice-President (Students & Learning) & Dean of Students, and special advisor to the president of Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Over the past several months, Leyla and Sean have been leading a team to brand, promote, encourage and celebrate McMaster's innovation, commercialization and entrepreneurship activities. In the spring, we'll launch a new McMaster innovation website to support students and faculty through their entrepreneurship journeys, build on our mentorship programs, share our success stories and attract investors and partners. We'll also be launching new entrepreneurship programs designed to increase multi-disciplinary collaboration, enhance the quality of entrepreneurial training, generate high value IP, and create McMaster startup companies with potential for local and global economic impact.

These are important steps toward building on and strengthening innovation, entrepreneurship and commercialization activities at McMaster. I look forward to updating Board members as programs and initiatives in this area continue to emerge.

Global Research Leadership

Central to enhancing research excellence at McMaster is our ability to attract and retain top research talent and build world-renowned research programs that strengthen our global leadership and impact. We have achieved many successes in this area, and I would like to highlight a few recent examples of the exceptional researchers whose work is having global impact.

New Canada Excellence Research Chair

Last month, I had the pleasure of welcoming world-renowned biosensing expert, [Niko Hildebrandt](#) to McMaster as Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Nano-Optical Biosensing and Molecular Diagnostics.

Dr. Hildebrandt joins McMaster from Université de Rouen Normandie in France and is one of the world's leading scientists in Förster resonance energy transfer (FRET), which enables scientists to analyze complex biological interactions at the nanoscale.

The CERC program, a Tri-Agency initiative, provides Dr. Hildebrandt with \$8 million over eight years to build a multidisciplinary research team focused on developing breakthrough biosensing and bioimaging methods with applications in clinical diagnostics, environmental protection and food safety. With a focus on molecular diagnostics, Dr. Hildebrandt aims to develop and commercialize new diagnostic biosensors that can help clinicians detect diseases like cancer earlier.

The CERC program supports Canadian universities' efforts to build Canada's reputation as a global leader in research and innovation, and is one of the most prestigious and generous awards available globally. [I had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Hildebrandt for a video conversation](#), which was posted on the Daily News. The work he's doing has tremendous potential to transform the way disease is

diagnosed and treated. I am excited to see his progress as he establishes his research program at McMaster.

Global Research Recognition from the New York Times

I'm delighted to share that a discovery made earlier this year by infectious disease researcher, Jonathan Stokes and his team has been [identified by the New York Times](#) as one of the year's most important scientific and technological advances.

Dr. Stokes and his lab successfully used AI to identify and discover a new antibiotic, called *aboucin*, which could be used to fight one of the world's most dangerous drug-resistant pathogens. The researchers, which included a team from MIT, used an AI algorithm to screen more than 6,500 antibacterial molecules and found 240 potential compounds to test. From there, researchers found nine potential antibiotics, including aboucin. What's remarkable is that, using AI, the screening process only took an hour and a half, compared to the thousands of research hours this discovery would have taken using conventional methods.

Dr. Stokes joined McMaster from the Massachusetts Institute for Technology in 2021 as part of the Global Nexus School for Pandemic Prevention and Response. Since then, he has been working with the Institute for Infectious Disease Research and the Michael G. DeGroote School for Antibiotic Discovery.

Dr. Stokes and his team exemplify the spirit of innovation that drives so many of our research teams across McMaster – I'm confident we will continue to see truly groundbreaking research from this talented team.

McMaster Faculty Named to List of Most Influential Researchers

Sixteen McMaster researchers have been named to [Clarivate Analytics' 2023](#) list of the world's most Highly Cited Researchers. The list is determined by the amount of highly cited papers they have published, which are defined as publications that rank in the top one per cent of citations in the researcher's field over the past decade, according to *Web of Science*.

The McMaster researchers recognized in this year's list are:

- Eric Brown, Department of Biochemistry & Biomedical Sciences
- Jan Brozek, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact
- Stuart Connolly, Department of Medicine
- John Eikelboom, Department of Medicine
- Gordon Guyatt, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact
- Paul Moayyedi, Department of Medicine
- Rebecca Morgan, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact
- Stuart Phillips, Department of Kinesiology
- Walter Reinisch, Department of Medicine
- Bram Rochweg, Department of Medicine
- Nancy Santesso, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact
- Holger Schünemann, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact
- Gregory Steinberg, Department of Medicine
- Jeffrey Weitz, Department of Medicine
- Gerry Wright, Department of Biochemistry & Biomedical Sciences
- Salim Yusuf, Department of Medicine

This list of extraordinary researchers represents the global reach of McMaster expertise, and is a reflection of the widespread impact and influence of our researchers.

Advancing Indigenous Research

The Indigenous Undergraduate Summer Research Scholars (IUSRS) program

As part of McMaster's strategic commitment to supporting pathways for Indigenous undergraduate students, 10 early researchers were on campus to take part in the [IndigiNerds](#) program (formerly known as the Indigenous Undergraduate Summer Research Scholars program), an intensive research training program hosted by the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI).

[Scholars from across Canada](#) had the opportunity to experience hands-on graduate-level research as part of the eight-week program, which is designed to guide Indigenous undergraduates as they prepare for graduate studies through mentorship, support and inspiration. Scholars take part in workshops and Indigenous Knowledge programming — all part of the program's wider goal to contribute to the success of Indigenous researchers.

Now in its ninth year, this hugely successful program is critical to supporting the next generation of Indigenous researchers, while providing students with the confidence needed to pursue graduate studies. I commend the faculty and staff at MIRI for enabling this important program.

Indigenous Research Primer

The McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI) has created the MIRI Indigenous Research Primer to guide researchers whose work engages with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

The primer emphasizes the need for meaningful, respectful and ethical collaboration at every step of the way in all research. It offers guidance on community-based participatory research, including the need to engage with elders and community partners to ensure the full and enthusiastic participation of community members, and to consider the impact of the outcome on the lands and peoples. The primer also provides guidance on Indigenous methodologies and research paradigms including the Two Row research paradigm, that establishes the ways in which two peoples from different laws and beliefs can co-exist in a healthy relationship, and explains Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing. It also guides researchers on what to do if a community does not consent to proposed research.

This primer is an important step in advancing and enabling [Indigenous Strategic Directions](#), the strategic plan co-created by MIRI and the Indigenous Education Council, which was launched in 2021. It also provides welcome guidance for our community as we work collectively to develop an environment that enables research to excel across disciplines and knowledge systems.

Research Security Update

Safeguarding our research is a critical priority at McMaster and we are committed to ensuring McMaster's research remains secure and competitive. As federal and provincial governments increase their efforts to protect research in universities and other research institutions, McMaster – through the Office of the Vice-President, Research – is working with our research community to support their research endeavours and academic freedom, while meeting the requirements of government funding agencies.

Our primary goal is to maximize funding success by providing guidance and supporting our faculty members to mitigate any perceived research security risk. To do this, we have expanded our Research Security Risk team with three new members, including our [Director of Research Security Risk](#). Together, they will swork with research colleagues across campus to comply with the research security requirements pertaining to grant applications as required by both levels of government.

As well, we continue to consult with our federal and provincial funding partners, seek advice from Public Safety Canada – Research Security Centre, and work with our institutional colleagues at U15 and the Ontario Council on University Research to identify best practices and ensure consistency across the sector as we all learn to navigate this new and evolving research landscape. This issue is not unique to McMaster –institutions across Canada are working to respond to the same requirements, and research security implications are being considered in the US and abroad.

We also launched our [Research Security landing page](#), which includes relevant research security information, resources and tools to assist our faculty members in broadening their understanding of the topic and identifying and assessing potential risk.

We expect the federal policy guidelines – which are anticipated to be announced later this month or early in the new year – will further inform our processes and protocols. I will continue to keep Board members updated on this critically important issue.

CAMPUS UPDATES

Institutional Priorities and Strategic Framework Report

McMaster has published the 2022-23 Institutional Priorities and Strategic Framework Report. This annual report is designed to highlight activities and developments taking place across the University that support McMaster’s five key priorities as outlined in our strategic plan. [Read the report](#).

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

RBC gift expands Black student success initiatives at McMaster

An historic new gift from the RBC Foundation will enable McMaster’s [Black Student Success Centre](#) to expand its reach and serve more Black students at McMaster and beyond. The \$1.5-million investment, announced last month on campus, will fund the Empowering Black Student Success: Unlocking Future Leaders program, which will impact students from high school through university and into their careers.

McMaster expands student supports as disability disclosures, accommodations increase

McMaster is expanding student accessibility supports as more students who disclose disabilities has resulted in a sharp increase in the number and complexity of academic accommodations, a strategic review has found. Over the last five years, there has been a 58.5 per cent increase in the registration of students with disabilities and a 62 per cent increase in students registering with mental health issues as their primary disability. Today, Student Accessibility Services serves approximately (SAS) 11 per cent of the McMaster student population.

New gift from CIBC supports scholarships for equity-deserving students in Engineering

A new gift of \$500,000 from CIBC to McMaster's Faculty of Engineering is being used to create scholarships that will foster inclusive excellence in the field of financial technology. The inaugural CIBC Technology Leaders Scholarships, valued at \$10,000 each, have been awarded to eight engineering co-op students who identify as equity-deserving, demonstrate enormous leadership potential in financial technology, and who are interested in working to build a more secure, equitable and sustainable future.

Hidden figures workshop explores racism, whiteness and oppression in academia

McMaster professor, Nathan Andrews is a co-founder of the Hidden Figures project, which explores how racism and whiteness occur in the social and natural sciences in Canada. This month, the project brought together more than 40 academics, early career scholars and graduate students, and practitioners from 13 institutions across Canada to discuss their experiences and ways to move toward true equity, diversity, inclusivity and decoloniality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Tradition meets innovation: Generative AI in McMaster classrooms

Students in a McMaster Rehabilitation Science course are using ChatGPT to assist in the development of education programs based on real-world scenarios. The programs are meant to help patients understand their treatment and manage their conditions. Students are being assessed on their critical appraisal of ChatGPT's output, such as comparing it with more reliable, peer-reviewed sources and verifying its accuracy.

Celebrating 30 years of midwifery education at McMaster and in Ontario

This year marks 30 years of midwifery education at McMaster. In 1993, a consortium was formed between McMaster, Laurentian University and Ryerson University (now Toronto Metropolitan University) to create an undergraduate program for midwifery. In that first year, seven students were enrolled. Since then, it has quadrupled in size and now welcomes 45 students annually.

Individuals with disabilities invited to serve as Lived Experience Accessibility consultants

McMaster students and alumni with disabilities are invited to participate in a project aimed at enhancing accessible learning experiences at the University. Participants will serve as Lived Experience Accessibility Consultants for the initiative, which is sponsored by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning. The call for consultants marks a new phase of the Accessible Teaching and Learning Roadmap project, which was launched in April 2023. The five-year strategic plan behind the project aims to holistically improve access to post-secondary education and academic outcomes for students with disabilities at McMaster.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

McMaster researchers discover new way to protect against infections like COVID-19

An exciting therapeutic discovery involving synthetic aptamers being developed by McMaster researchers is showing promise in protecting against viral infections like COVID-19. Researchers found that a specific aptamer, which are made up of DNA and can be fashioned to stick to various targets, much like

antibodies, protected mice from COVID-19 infection just as well as the clinically approved antibodies used during the pandemic. Synthetic aptamers are a platform technology, meaning it could be applied to all kinds of different viruses.

Revolutionizing patient care through artificial intelligence

Manaf Zargoush, researcher and associate professor of Health Policy and Management at the DeGroote School of Business is helping to advance the management and prevention of delayed discharge using data analytics, artificial intelligence, and optimization. His research — which can be applied globally — has the potential to reduce costs and hospital waiting times and improve patients' health.

Indigenous Research Day

The second annual Indigenous Research day, co-hosted by the [McMaster Indigenous Research Institute \(MIRI\)](#), the [Indigenous Health Learning Lodge](#), the [Indigenous Studies Department](#), [Indigenous Student Services](#), the [FEAST Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research](#), University Advancement, and the [Indigenous Health Movement](#), brought together scholars from across campus to showcase Indigenous research.

Demo Day at the Clinic empowers health innovators to transform ideas into impact

Health innovation and entrepreneurship hub, the Clinic, recently hosted Demo Day, an opportunity for innovators to share their health-care innovations with the community and members of the McMaster innovation ecosystem. While their work varies — from therapeutics to assistive devices —there is a common thread of passion and the belief that these innovations can, and will, help improve the lives of the end-user and impact health care.

Developing future generations of diverse entrepreneurs

Led by DeGroote School of Business professor Benson Honig, The Centre for Research on Community Oriented Entrepreneurship (CRCE) will conduct research that supports marginalized and minority persons in examining problems creatively and leveraging their constraints to foster innovative business solutions. Born out of COVID-19, the platform initially sought to help minorities, immigrants, women and persons with disabilities whose careers suffered during the pandemic turn their skills to community-minded entrepreneurship. It then transcended borders as Honig and his team worked with entrepreneurs in places such as Brazil, Kenya and with Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

Nice to MeGPT you: Student's AI communication tool sparks conversation

Second-year Computer Engineering student Jaavin Mohanakumar turned a lifelong passion for coding and programming into an AI web application that can be personalized to respond like a specific individual. Using MeGPT, a user can have a two-way conversation with another person's AI clone, helping make online social interaction easier and more authentic. Mohanakumar has been contacted by several businesses interested in applying MeGPT software to their own websites. Its ability to capture brand voice and persona is highly sought after, as it has the potential to replace the standardized AI chat functions on many websites.

ENGAGING LOCAL, NATIONAL, INDIGENOUS AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

McMaster program taking post-secondary classes inside prison walls

Under a national project spearheaded by [Savage Bear, Director of MIRI](#), the Indigenous Studies Department is taking students into a federal correctional facility, where incarcerated and non-incarcerated students earn university credits and challenge expectations. The program has taken two Indigenous Studies courses to the Grand Valley Institution for Women so far, with an Indigenous Arts and Culture course currently wrapping up.

McMaster student, recent grads win Hamilton Environmentalist of the Year Awards

A McMaster student and three recent graduates have been recognized for their efforts to address environmental and sustainability challenges in our local community. Established in 1979, the Hamilton Environmentalists of the Year (EOY) Awards recognize individuals and groups who have made a significant contribution to the protection and/or enhancement of the environment in the City of Hamilton.

International and exchange students, McMaster alumni share dishes from home countries as part of Taste of Home initiative

International and exchange students, and the McMaster alumni community were invited to share their favourite recipes that remind them of home as part of the Taste of Home initiative. After a vote by McMaster community members, four dishes were selected as part of the Taste of Home menu and were featured on the menu in La Piazza. The initiative is offered in partnership with McMaster Hospitality Services, Housing and Conference Services, Alumni Association and the Student Success Centre.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

McMaster surpasses targets for carbon reduction investments

McMaster has surpassed its carbon reduction targets for its investment portfolio a full two years ahead of schedule. As outlined in this year's Annual Financial Report, the University has successfully reduced the carbon intensity of its investments by 70 per cent from 2018 levels, surpassing its original goal of 65 per cent by 2025. Over the past five years, McMaster has also divested from higher-carbon holdings, which has resulted in a decrease in its holdings in the Carbon Underground 200 (CU200) to 1.6 per cent from 2.7 per cent last year.

McMaster breaks ground on its largest, most innovative student residence

Construction has officially begun on McMaster's 15th and largest residence building, Lincoln Alexander Hall. Scheduled to open for Fall 2026, the residence will be home to 1,366 students and enable McMaster to guarantee housing for all first-year undergraduate students. This addition will provide more housing stock in Hamilton for students and offer another layer of support as they transition to university.

New training module enhances cybersecurity awareness on campus

McMaster, students, staff, faculty and researchers can now take a new Information Security Training module. McMaster's Information Security Services team is leading the delivery of this new learning module, available on Avenue to Learn. The module addresses important topics like email phishing, passwords, multi-factor authentication, and data storage. The training program is optional and can be

completed at the learner's pace. It was developed using resources from the Government of Canada's cybersecurity program and in consultation with various partners across campus.

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Three outstanding faculty members named Distinguished University Professors

Three outstanding faculty members have been conferred the title of Distinguished University Professor. Daniel Coleman, Mark Crowther and Stuart Phillips have earned the recognition, which is given to faculty members who have demonstrated distinction and impact well beyond McMaster in one or more fields of endeavour. Those awarded the title have demonstrated an outstanding and sustained research record that demonstrates international impact and recognition. They also demonstrate excellence in teaching and learning and a history of service that has had an impact on the community.

Two exceptional students receive Governor General's Academic Medal

Every year, two outstanding graduating McMaster students receive the Governor General's Academic Medal, one of the most prestigious student awards in Canada. This year's winners — Raha Hassan and Sophie Poznanski — are being awarded the Governor General's Academic Gold Medal, which is awarded to a student who achieves the highest academic standing at the graduate level. Established in 1873, the award recognizes exceptional academic achievement. Earning this accolade not only places this year's recipients among the top students to graduate from McMaster; it places them among the top students in all of Canada.

McMaster named one of Hamilton-Niagara's top employers

For the ninth year in a row, McMaster University has proudly secured a position on Hamilton-Niagara's Top Employers list. As one of the area's top employers, McMaster currently employs 18,000 faculty, researchers, staff and students, in a variety of roles. [*Hamilton-Niagara's Top Employers list*](#) is an annual competition organized by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers. This special designation recognizes employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work.

FALL CONVOCATION

Meet McMaster's Fall 2023 valedictorians

Mehreen Shami, Reemal Shahbaz and Liza-Anastasia DiCecco represented their student communities and delivered a speech to fellow students, faculty, honoured guests, family and friends attending convocation ceremonies on November 23rd and 24th. The three graduate students, selected by a committee, have demonstrated academic excellence and exhibited leadership during their time at McMaster.

Meet the Fall convocations honorary degree recipients

A driving force for equitable, community-focused research at McMaster, a pioneer in stroke recovery and treatment, and a champion of science education: Former McMaster President, Patrick Deane, along with Janice Eng, Canada Research Chair in Neurological Rehabilitation, and Emily Calandrelli, an aerospace engineer and host of the acclaimed children's science show *Emily's Wonder Lab*, were all named honorary degree recipients.