

PRESIDENT'S KUDOS REPORT

MAY 2023



York alumna [Kathleen Taylor](#) was officially installed as the University's first woman chancellor during a May 10 ceremony held on York's Keele Campus. A graduate of the JD/MBA program offered by Osgoode Hall Law School and the Schulich School of Business, Taylor became the first woman to Chair the board of one of Canada's big five banks when she took the helm of the Royal Bank's governing body a decade ago. She also served as the first president and CEO of the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts chain following its iconic founder and was the first woman to lead a major branded international hotel company. Taylor's first public act as chancellor will be conferring degrees on thousands of new graduates at Spring Convocation, June 9 to 23. She will also serve as a member of both the Board and Senate, bringing her vast experience and knowledge to both of the University's governing bodies.



[York University's School of Continuing Studies](#) celebrated the official launch of its new, signature home – a state-of-the-art building with a unique, twisted design located at the York University Keele Campus. The building allows the School more capacity, space and resources to support York University's Academic Plan 2020-2025. The York University English Language Institute's pathway programs, for instance, are core to the University's international student growth and help the University achieve its priority of reaching a 20 to 25 per cent international student population within the next five years. This new building will also support the School's objective of expanding its offerings through innovative programs in emerging fields that meet the needs of diverse learners. The new School of Continuing Studies was made possible by many teams and divisions, including the Division of Finance and Administration, School of Continuing Studies, the Provost's Division and many others.



This month, York University shared the University's first [Decolonizing, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion \(DEDI\) Strategy](#). York is among the first Canadian universities to incorporate decolonization in a meaningful and substantial way throughout a document of this kind, and this strategy will formalize and coordinate DEDI efforts across the institution. The DEDI Strategy acknowledges York University's colonial structures and recognizes that many forms of discrimination and oppression exist both in society and in higher education. It provides a lens on the University's past, present and future, allowing it to focus clearly on the efforts and resources needed to drive positive change. The strategy includes five strategic directions – teaching and learning, research and innovation, representation and success, campus climate and environment, and leadership and capacity building.



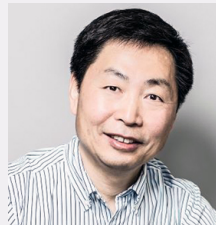
York University Political Science alumna, [Nadine Spencer](#), was appointed to the Toronto Police Services Board on April 28. A York Board of Governors member, Nadine Spencer, is the founder of BrandEQ Group Inc., a global agency specializing in social change marketing, communications, and public relations. Ms. Spencer has accelerated strategic growth and brand visibility for a diverse client portfolio. She also pioneered BrandEQ Black, BrandEQ's cultural sensitivity arm, whose goal is to work with a variety of conscious organizations to look at racial biases in advertising and marketing. She is also the interim CEO of the Black Business and Professional Association. Recently, she was one of 400 people invited to the Trudeau/ Biden dinner and said she was proud to be representing the 1,700 Black women whom she serves. Her leadership in addressing greater equity & representation of communities across Canada make her an excellent fit for this role.



The Council of Ontario University Programs in Nursing awarded [Leo Macawile](#) the Excellence in Professional Nursing Practice at the Undergraduate Level Award. He is the first York University student to receive the honour. The award, which recognizes academic success, kind and compassionate care, and positive leadership attributes, is the latest milestone in Macawile's notable career. In May 2022, Macawile received the York University Deschamps Compassionate Nursing Prize for demonstrating talent in his field through kindness and compassion shown toward patients. Earlier this year, he received two Calumet and Stong College awards, the Olga Cirak Alumni Bursary Award and The Virginia Rock Award, for his exceptional academic ability and outstanding commitment to the school community.



Professor [Christina Sharpe](#), Canada Research Chair in Black Studies in the Humanities at York University, was featured in the *New York Times* article marking the launch of her book *Ordinary Notes*. The feature, titled, "The Woman Shaping a Generation of Black Thought", highlights how Sharpe is exploring and expanding ways of looking at Blackness in history, culture, language, and everyday Black life.



One [CubeSat satellite](#) created by York University students, and another with hardware supplied by students, will launch from the Kennedy Space Center and be placed in orbit by International Space Station astronauts. Zeng Hong (George) Zhu, director of the Space Engineering Design Laboratory at York's Lassonde School of Engineering, led the team of students who created an entirely York-made satellite set to enter space this summer. The second CubeSat, a University of Manitoba-led CubeSat project, draws on innovative hardware provided by Lassonde students and supervised by Regina Lee, professor of space engineering. It is set to be launched into space this summer.



York University is leading a \$318.4-million interdisciplinary research project in partnership with Queens University. "[Connected Minds: Neural and Machine Systems for a Healthy, Just Society](#)" is a first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to examine the relationships between human minds and machines, and explore how society can evolve with these emerging technologies in a socially responsible way. It is supported by \$105.7 million in funding from the federal government's Canada First Research Excellence Fund. The program's operations will involve a directorate led by internationally renowned neuroscientist Prof. Doug Crawford, as scientific director, along with intellectual property and technology law expert Prof. Pina D'Agostino as vice-director, and Indigenous health scholar Prof. Sean Hillier as associate director. Engineer and neuroscientist Prof. Gunnar Blohm joins as the vice-director from Queen's University.



[Isaac Smith](#), assistant professor in the Earth and Space Science and Engineering Department and Canada Research Chair in Planetary Science, was recently awarded two research grants from the Canadian Space Agency to support a better understanding of Mars' environments to enable exploration missions and potential habitation. The funded research projects support a focus on ice, a critical resource for supporting future human missions to Mars by serving as a source of drinking water or rocket fuel. Martian regions that are abundant in icy deposits will become primary targets for future landing and exploration zones.



[Susan Dieleman](#), a PhD graduate from York, is the inaugural Jarislowky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership at the University of Lethbridge, a position dedicated to the study of ethics in politics. As the Jarislowky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership, Dieleman is tasked with assisting the development of an innovative program of scholarship (teaching, research and experiential learning) that will expand knowledge and training for students, politicians and public servants in the ethical practice of politics, fiduciary responsibility and democratic governance.



A collaborative research project led by York University Kinesiology & Health Science Professor [Ali Abdul-Sater](#) will seek answers at the molecular level to help develop more effective therapies for psoriatic arthritis. The Krembil Foundation, a family-led charitable organization, has confirmed a \$664,356 grant in support of this research. Having recently developed a successful therapeutic approach for rheumatoid arthritis and gout, Abdul-Sater's lab will expand its focus to psoriatic arthritis (PsA), a less common debilitating inflammatory disease.



York University's 2022-23 President's Welcome Back Video and 2022 President's Annual Report: Right the Future were both winners of the International Association of Business Communicators, Toronto Chapter's [2023 Ovation Awards](#) for communications excellence in the audio/visual and publication categories, respectively. The President's Office Communications team, including Krista Davidson, director of communications, Madeleine Laforest, social media and communications planning specialist, and Tina Dealwis, senior writer and communications specialist, received the awards at the 2023 Ovations Awards celebration on May 4.



With up to \$20,000 in support, the [Lassonde School of Engineering's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Seed Funding](#) supports the development of original initiatives that promote EDI culture, encouraging students, faculty and staff to embrace creativity and find ways to make the School a more diverse and inclusive space. The first project, *Getting on with Tech*, is led by Jean-Jacques Rosseau, research associate, and Michael Jenkin, professor of electrical engineering and computer science. The pilot initiative will establish a community learning program that promotes public understanding of computer science. It aims to provide equitable access to technical education, targeting adult learners from communities that are underrepresented in STEAM disciplines including women, recent immigrants, and Black and Indigenous communities. The second funded project, *Integrating EDI components into MECH curriculum*, is led by Cuiying Jian, assistant professor in mechanical engineering. The original initiative aims to address the low coverage of EDI principles in engineering education.



York University faculty and staff were celebrated with [Student Accessibility Services Awards](#) for enhancing student accessibility at York. The 2022-23 Student Accessibility Services Award winners are:

- Ahmad Firas Khalid, sessional assistant professor, Faculty of Health
- Amila Butorovic, associate professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies
- Devin Phillips, assistant professor, Faculty of Health
- Ivona Hideg, associate professor, Schulich School of Business
- Jeanine Tuitt, supports and services coordinator, Office of Student Community Relations
- Jennifer Spinney, assistant professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies
- Katherine Di Lorenzo, student support advisor, Student Support Advising
- Lindsay LaMorre, associate director, Experiential Education, Faculty of Education
- Lois King, contract faculty, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies
- Makini McGuire-Brown, course instructor, PhD candidate, Schulich School of Business
- Mark Thomas, professor and Chair of Sociology Department, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies
- Mary Desrocher, associate professor, Faculty of Health
- Matthew Keough, assistant professor, Faculty of Health
- Matthias Hoben, associate professor, Faculty of Health
- Ruodan Shao, associate professor, Schulich School of Business
- Stephanie Pugliese Domenikos, assistant professor, Faculty of Science
- Taylor Cleworth, assistant professor, Faculty of Health
- Theodore Noseworthy, associate professor and research Chair, Schulich School of Business
- Yueting Chen, PhD candidate, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies



Four players from the [York University Lions football team](#) were selected for coveted roster spots in 2023 East-West Bowl. Evan Anseeuw, Nathan Brennan, Jason Janvier-Messier and Alfred Olay will join the East team, participating in a game that will showcase players who will be eligible for the following year's CFL draft. York's group of athletes heading to the Bowl is headlined by Olay, who was an Ontario University Athletics first-team all-star and a U SPORTS first-team all-Canadian in 2023. He was the first Lion to be named to the national first team since 2004.



[Joan Goldfarb](#) is honoured with the 2023 Museum Volunteer Award by the Canadian Museum Association for her transformational contributions to advance Canadian art appreciation, support education and research, as well as being a visionary leader and role model. Joan's commitment is enduring and passionate to Canadian art through her commitment to sponsoring with her husband the Joan and Martin Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts, and more recently the Joan and Martin Goldfarb Art Gallery of York University, Keele Campus in North York.



[Sachil Singh](#), assistant professor of physical culture and health technologies in datafied societies, recently earned recognition in Japan when he was honoured with a knighthood for his accomplishments in karate-do. Among his other research and teaching responsibilities at York, Singh will teach a practicum course on karate-do in the Kinesiology program starting in Fall 2023 where his pedagogy will promote principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.



Kahstarohkwanoron [Lindsay Monture](#), who graduated from York with a Bachelor of Arts in Film and Media Studies, has been named the new festival director of the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, the world's largest showcase for film, video, audio, digital and interactive media made by Indigenous creators. In her new role, Monture, who is Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk), Turtle Clan from the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, will select and oversee the festival's programming team, as well as choose curators and jury members.



[Andrew Dawson](#), an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at the Glendon Campus of York University, and Isabel Krakoff, a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology, were announced as the winners of the inaugural Alexis de Tocqueville Award for the best conference paper on democracy and public opinion. The announcement was made during WAPOR's 75th conference. The paper "Political Trust and Democracy: The Critical Citizens Thesis Re-Examined" empirically assesses competing perspectives on the relationship between democracy and political trust. It draws upon data from the World Values Survey, the European Values Study and several other sources to undertake multi-level analyses using a cross-national panel dataset of 82 countries for the period 1990-2020.



York University School of Public Policy & Administration student, [Sakeina Syed](#) received the Student Award of Excellence from the Canadian Association of Journalists for her article "End of the Line," about the Scarborough RT line closure in Maisonneuve.



YSpace startup, [Spotwork](#), is one of the nine innovative projects selected out of a \$12M fund to support the labour gap in Ontario. Spotwork will create a unique technological solution to open new labour sources for employers and give thousands of job seekers a well-deserved second chance at work.



A sculpture designed by [Brandon Vickerd](#), artist and professor of visual arts at York University, debuted at Keele and Finch. The 41-foot sculpture made out of Corten steel is titled "The Heights" and is meant to evoke how the history of a place informs its present and future. The seed of "The Heights" began in 2020, when the Duke Heights Business Improvement Area put out a public call for professional Canadian artists to propose a landmark public artwork that would bring back and reassert the Finch-Keele community after years of construction in the area preparing for the forthcoming Light Rail Transit line. Among the resulting 80 applicants, five artists, including Vickerd, were chosen to submit detailed proposals.



York University health policy and equity PhD student [William MacGregor](#) won the Peterkin Brett-MacLean Student Prize for the best student presentation at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Health Humanities.



During Canadian Screen Week (April 11 to 16), The Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television handed out more than two dozen [Canadian Screen Awards](#) to York alumni, from the School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design and the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, recognizing their achievements in film, television and the digital sector. The York University alumni winners are:

- Best Talk Program or Series – *1 Queen 5 Queers*; Awardee: Aisha Fairclough
- Best Sports Host – *2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games*; Awardee: Andi Petrillo
- Best Sound, Documentary or Factual – *Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry It On*; Awardee: Elma Bello
- Best Performing Arts Program – *Buffy Sainte-Marie: Starwalker*; Awardee: Tracy Galvin
- Best Writing Web, Program or Series – *Chateau Laurier: An Unfortunate Turn of Events*; Awardee: Emily Weedon
- Best Biography or Arts Documentary Program or Series – *Comedy Punks: Kids in the Hall*; Awardee: Laura Michalchyshy
- Best Children's or Youth Fiction Program or Series – *Detention Adventure*; Awardee: Lauren Corber
- Best Live Production, Social Media – *ET Canada Live*; Awardee: Jodie Davis
- Best Web Program or Series Non-Fiction – *ET Canada Pride*; Awardee: Jodie Davis
- Best Original Music, Animation – *Let's Go Luna! Dig it Daddy-O*; Awardee: Ari Posner
- Best Web Program or Series, Fiction – *Revenge of the Black Best Friend*; Awardee: Amanda Parris
- Best Documentary Program – *Sex with Sue*; Awardee: Lisa Rideout and Sam Dunn
- Best Guest Performance, Comedy – *Sort Of: Sort of Amsterdam/Sort of I Love You*; Awardee: Amanda Brugel
- Best Original Music, Comedy – *Sort Of: Sort of Who She Is*; Awardee: Vivek Shraya
- Best Writing, Factual – *Still Standing: Oxford*; Awardee: Graham Chittenden
- Best TV Movie – *Swindler Seduction*; Awardee: Jonas Prupas
- Best Writing, Variety or Sketch Comedy – *TallBoyz: Don't wear in front of the song*; Awardee: Franco Nguyen
- Best Reality/Competition Program or Series – *The Amazing Race Canada*; Awardee: Michael Tersigni
- Best Picture Editing, Reality/Competition – *The Amazing Race Canada: Where is Gurmail*; Awardee: Michael Tersigni
- Best Writing, Children's or Youth – *The Hardy Boys: Captured!*; Awardee: Ramona Barckert
- Best Performance, Sketch Comedy (Individual or Ensemble) – *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*; Awardee: Stacey McGunnigle
- Ted Rogers Best Feature Length Documentary – *To Kill a Tiger*; Awardee: Cornelia Principe



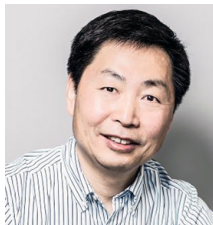
[Matt Dean](#), a Lions football linebacker, captain through the 2022 season and graduate student at York University, was selected by the Saskatchewan Roughriders in the Canadian Football League (CFL) 2023 draft. Dean garnered no shortage of attention throughout the Lions' most recent season, having topped the majority of the team's defensive statistics this year. Dean was selected in the second round of the latest CFL draft, going 21st overall. His newest team, the Saskatchewan Roughriders, are one of the CFL's preeminent franchises, having won four Grey Cups throughout their history in 1966, 1989, 2007 and most recently in 2013. This marks the sixth consecutive year that a York Lions footballer has been drafted into the CFL, with Dean being the 10th drafted Lion in that timeframe.



Seven projects led by York University researchers were awarded a combined \$2.4 million from the [New Frontiers in Research Fund](#) (NFRF) in two of its funding streams: Exploration and Special Calls, announced at the end of April. The NFRF: Exploration stream is a federal program that supports high-risk, high-reward interdisciplinary research. The Special Calls stream in this latest funding round supports research for post-pandemic recovery.

The York-led projects in the Exploration stream are:

- Rachel Gorman, Faculty of Health: Training an AI to detect medical bias and unmet health needs through critical race and disability theory and community-generated data
- Elizabeth Clare, Faculty of Science: The ethical challenge to non-invasive environmental e(DNA) technology
- Stephanie Ben-Ishai, Osgoode Hall Law School: The Debt Relief Project: Online and Low-Cost Access to Bankruptcy
- Zheng Hong Zhu, Lassonde School of Engineering: 3D and 4D Laser Metal Additive Manufacturing in Zerogravity and Vacuum for Space Exploration



The York-led projects in Special Calls stream are:

- Mary Wiktorowicz, Faculty of Health Governance of One Health challenges: Fostering collaboration
- Jonathan Weiss, Faculty of Health: Mobilizing environments to improve psychological and physiological experiences of thriving in Autistic people
- Jeannie Samuel, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies: Building equitable and resilient community-based emergency response strategies in rural Guatemala



Four innovative and community-focused [Faculty of Health studies](#) will shed new light on anxiety, thanks to an investment in York University mental health researchers by Beneva, the largest mutual insurance company in Canada. The \$200,000 Anxiety Research Fund, powered by Beneva, aims to enhance assessment and treatment supports for individuals coping with anxiety – a debilitating and frequently hidden affliction experienced by one in five Canadians.

The selected projects are:

- Exposure Therapy Using Virtual Reality, headed by School of Health Policy & Management Professor Lora Appel
- Retooling Black Youth Anxiety, headed by School of Global Health Professor Godfred Boateng
- Reducing Anxiety About HPV Tests, headed by School of Nursing Professor Catriona Buick
- Decision-making in a Global Health Crisis, headed by Department of Psychology Professor Shayna Rosenbaum

